



DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XB512

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Advisory Panel

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice; solicitation of nominations.

SUMMARY: NMFS solicits nominations for the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Advisory Panel (AP). NMFS consults with and considers the comments and views of the HMS AP when preparing and implementing Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) or FMP amendments for Atlantic tunas, swordfish, sharks, and billfish.

Nominations are being sought to fill approximately one-third (12) of the seats on the HMS AP for 3-year appointments. Individuals with definable interests in the recreational and commercial fishing and related industries, environmental community, academia, and non-governmental organizations are considered for membership on the HMS AP. NMFS also intends to fill an additional vacancy on the HMS AP for the remainder of a term that expires on December 31, 2023.

DATES: Nominations must be received on or before *[Insert date 30 days after the date of publication in the Federal Register]*.

ADDRESSES: You may submit nominations and requests for the Advisory Panel Statement of Organization, Practices, and Procedures by email to HMSAP.Nominations@noaa.gov. Include in the subject line the following identifier: “HMS AP Nominations.”

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Peter Cooper at (301) 427-8503.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Atlantic HMS fisheries are managed under the dual authority of both the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act; 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*) and the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act (ATCA; 16 U.S.C. 971 *et seq.*). The 2006 Consolidated Atlantic HMS Fishery Management Plan (2006 Consolidated HMS FMP) and its amendments are implemented by regulations at 50 CFR part 635.

The Magnuson-Stevens Act requires the establishment of an AP for each FMP for Atlantic HMS, *i.e.*, tunas, swordfish, billfish, and sharks. 16 U.S.C. 1854(g)(1)(A)-(B). Since the inception of the AP in 1998, NMFS has consulted with and considered the comments and views of AP members when preparing and implementing Atlantic HMS FMPs or FMP amendments. In this notice, NMFS solicits nominations for the Atlantic HMS AP. Nominations are being sought to fill approximately one-third (12) of the seats on the HMS AP for 3-year appointments. Individuals with definable interests in the recreational and commercial fishing and related industries, environmental community, academia, and non-governmental organizations are considered for membership on the HMS AP as described below. NMFS also intends to select a nominee to fill an additional academic vacancy on the HMS AP for the remainder of a term that expires on December 31, 2023. This vacancy is the result of a sitting HMS AP member moving to the HMS AP seat designated for the ICCAT Advisory Committee Chair.

Procedures and Guidelines

A. Nomination Procedures for Appointments to the Advisory Panel

Nomination packages should include:

1. The name of the nominee and a description of his/her interest in HMS or HMS fisheries, or in particular species of sharks, swordfish, tunas, or billfish;
2. Contact information, including mailing address, phone, and email of the nominee;

3. A statement of background and/or qualifications;
4. A written commitment that the nominee shall actively participate in good faith, and consistent with ethics obligations, in the meetings and tasks of the HMS AP; and
5. A list of outreach resources that the nominee has at his/her disposal to communicate qualifications for HMS AP membership.

Qualification for membership includes one or more of the following: (1) experience in HMS recreational fisheries; (2) experience in HMS commercial fisheries; (3) experience in fishery-related industries (*e.g.*, marinas, bait and tackle shops); (4) experience in the scientific community working with HMS; and/or (5) representation of a private, non-governmental, regional, national, or international organization that represents marine fisheries, or environmental, governmental, or academic interests regarding HMS.

Tenure for the HMS AP

Member tenure will be for 3 years, with approximately one-third of the members' terms expiring on December 31 of each year. Nominations are sought for terms beginning January 2022 and expiring December 2024. NMFS also intends to select a nominee to fill an additional vacancy for the remainder of a term that expires on December 31, 2023.

B. Participants

Nominations for the HMS AP will be accepted to allow representation from commercial and recreational fishing interests, academic/scientific interests, and the environmental/non-governmental organization community, for individuals who are knowledgeable about Atlantic HMS and/or Atlantic HMS fisheries. Current representation on the HMS AP, as shown in Table 1, consists of 12 members representing commercial interests, 12 members representing recreational interests, 4 members representing environmental interests, 4 academic representatives, and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) Advisory Committee

Chair. NMFS seeks to fill 4 commercial, 4 recreational, 3 academic, and 1 environmental organization vacancies for terms starting in 2022. In addition to these 12 vacancies, NMFS also intends to select a nominee to fill an academic vacancy for the remainder of the term that expires on December 31, 2023. This vacancy is the result of a sitting HMS AP member moving to the HMS AP seat designated for the ICCAT Advisory Committee Chair.

In filling vacancies, NMFS will seek to maintain the current representation from each of the sectors. NMFS also considers species expertise and representation from the fishing regions (Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Southeast, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean) to ensure the diversity and balance of the HMS AP. Table 1 includes the current representation on the HMS AP by sector, region, and species with terms that are expiring identified in bold. It is not meant to indicate that NMFS will only consider persons who have expertise in the species or fishing regions that are listed. Rather, NMFS will aim toward having as diverse and balanced an AP as possible. The intent is to have a group that, as a whole, reflects an appropriate and equitable balance and mix of interests given the responsibilities of the HMS AP.

Table 1 -- Current Representation on the HMS AP by Sector, Region, and Species

Sector	Fishing Region	Species	Date Appointed	Date Term Expires	Member Status
Academic*	All	Swordfish / Tuna	1/1/2021	12/31/2023	Active
Academic	All	Tuna	1/1/2019	12/31/2021	Expiring
Academic	Gulf of Mexico / Southeast	Shark	1/1/2019	12/31/2021	Expiring
Academic	Southeast	Swordfish / HMS	1/1/2019	12/31/2021	Expiring
Commercial	Mid-Atlantic	HMS / Shark	1/1/2020	12/31/2022	Active
Commercial	Mid-Atlantic	Swordfish / Tuna	1/1/2020	12/31/2022	Active
Commercial	Gulf of Mexico	Shark	1/1/2020	12/31/2022	Active
Commercial	Gulf of Mexico	Sharks	1/1/2021	12/31/2023	Active
Commercial	Northeast	Tuna	1/1/2021	12/31/2023	Active
Commercial	Gulf of Mexico/Southeast	Swordfish / Tuna	1/1/2021	12/31/2023	Active
Commercial	Gulf of Mexico	Tuna	1/1/2021	12/31/2023	Active
Commercial	Northeast	Tuna	1/1/2021	12/31/2023	Active
Commercial	Northeast / Southeast / Gulf of Mexico	HMS / Tuna	1/1/2019	12/31/2021	Expiring
Commercial	Southeast	Shark	1/1/2019	12/31/2021	Expiring
Commercial	Southeast	Swordfish / Tuna	1/1/2019	12/31/2021	Expiring
Commercial	Northeast	Swordfish / Tuna	1/1/2019	12/31/2021	Expiring
Environmental	All	Tuna	1/1/2020	12/31/2022	Active
Environmental	All	HMS	1/1/2020	12/31/2022	Active
Environmental	All	Shark	1/1/2021	12/31/2023	Active
Environmental	Caribbean	HMS	1/1/2019	12/31/2021	Expiring
Recreational	Northeast	HMS	1/1/2020	12/31/2022	Active
Recreational	Northeast	Tuna/Sharks	1/1/2020	12/31/2022	Active
Recreational	Mid-Atlantic	HMS	1/1/2020	12/31/2022	Active
Recreational	Southeast	Billfish	1/1/2020	12/31/2022	Active
Recreational	Gulf of Mexico	HMS	1/1/2020	12/31/2022	Active
Recreational	All	Billfish	1/1/2021	12/31/2023	Active
Recreational	Mid-Atlantic	Shark	1/1/2021	12/31/2023	Active
Recreational	Southeast/Mid Atlantic	Billfish	1/1/2021	12/31/2023	Active
Recreational	Northeast	Tuna / Shark	1/1/2019	12/31/2021	Expiring
Recreational	Gulf of Mexico / Southeast	HMS	1/1/2019	12/31/2021	Expiring
Recreational	Mid-Atlantic	HMS	1/1/2019	12/31/2021	Expiring
Recreational	Southeast	HMS / Billfish	1/1/2019	12/31/2021	Expiring

Note: Terms that are expiring or associated with current members stepping down are identified in bold and marked as “Expiring”. *Designates term shift to the HMS AP seat designated for the ICCAT Advisory Committee Chair.

Five additional members on the HMS AP include one member representing each of the following Councils: New England Fishery Management Council, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, and the Caribbean Fishery Management Council. The HMS AP also includes 22 ex-officio participants: 20 representatives of the coastal states and 2 representatives of the interstate commissions (the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission).

NMFS will provide the necessary administrative support, including technical assistance, for the HMS AP. However, NMFS will not compensate participants with monetary support of any kind. Depending on availability of funds, members may be reimbursed for travel costs related to the HMS AP meetings.

C. Meeting Schedule

Meetings of the HMS AP will be held as frequently as necessary but are routinely held twice each year. In recent years, meetings have been held once in the spring, and once in the fall. The meetings may be held in conjunction with public hearings.

Dated: November 12, 2021.

Michael Ruccio,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries,

National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2021-25097 Filed: 11/16/2021 8:45 am; Publication Date: 11/17/2021]